The Watergate Caper 8/19/72 Harold Weisberg

If my hunch is correct, this will reach you only after what I anticipate.

There is too much too unusual about MacGregor's announcement of today and too much of the semantics with which we should have become familiar in the too little about which he said too much so evasively.

After all this time he announces- and on a Saturday, yet, when most bureaus are closed and there is minimal audience and minimal radio and TV coverage - that long, long ago John Mitchell had a personal, private investigation of this made. What does it say? The completely astounding - purity of the committee and the White House. How was the investigation made? By lawyers of course, for Mitchell, and MacGregor can't remember any name. Naturally. He's bad on names, except in calling them. And no "responsible" official of the WH or committee was involved. Even when they are caught, so they become not responsible.

issued 9/15

I think this means the Department of Justice has let the administration know they are at the point where they can no longer hold back on indictments, so MacGregor lets it be known that nobody involved is "responsible", if he is a White House consultant, the committee's director of security (and Martha's personal *** jabber), the committee's finance chairman or counsel. Nobody involved is responsible. And the test of responsibility is involment. Involvement yes? Responsibility no!

GOP handling of this, from a press point of view, is almost a guarantee of coming AND close indictments. Mitchell was liberated two months ago, remember, and this is HIS investigation so carefully downplayed and hedged.

My reason for ~~handling~~ this memo is because I can't be sure of the timing. I would thing that the weekend downplay means this coming week. I'll be interested in any stories any of you may see from correspondents for your local papers, on this, which is not too likely, although all decent-sized bureaus have a skeleton weekend coverage, or the charges when filed and the color, personality stories with them. They may add to what I'll see in the Post and at least the AP B wire immediately, and I'll want to stay on top because people are asking me.

The indictment of the five is inevitable. That of Hunt and even Caddy may not make headlines as big as we may anticipate, depending on the area, ownersip of media, news competition and other timing. Smart handling would be to have it during the convention, when that will, however dull, have most of the special correspondents out of DC and the convention itself will command most space-no matter how pointless the stories.

The charges, we should expect, are those that can't be avoided. There should be more and there is little likelihood. People known to be involved will not be included. Stans violated the law, as did others, but they'll not be named. And, of course, once indicted all those indicted have a legitimate reason for refusing to be part of depositions to be taken by the Democrats, as you should understand. There was considerable doubt in my mind earlier, under the 5th amendment. Which makes more intriguing EBWilliams' few named for deposing. Take away those to be charged and he has announced plans for deposing damned few.

In short, the prospects for major news developments are few, so the need for small clues is greater than usual.

James J. Kilpatrick, racist turned "conservative", has an interesting theory:Castro was going to contribute to the McGovern campaign, the anti-Castro Cubans found out about it and planned to get the goods. Translated, this means more Moscow Gold. Or is that before the time of most of you?Anyway, that's one way of cleaning up crime. Joking aside, there has to be some kind of fix on. Nothing else required this much delay. Now, if the crime had been in the streets instead of private property, that'd have been different. Then the Mitchell re-interpretation of the 6th Amendment would have been in force, with enough extra charges added to guarantee that almost any lawyer would recommend taking a deal of his client,

HW